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WHITE POTATOES MAY CHANGE COLOR DURING COOKING

White potatoes are not always white when they come from the kettle. During cooking the white flesh may take on a grey, green, yellow, or brown shade.

Iron in the cooking water may tint potatoes yellow or brown. The iron may come from water containing iron salts, so-called "rusty water," or from an iron cooking kettle or an enamelware kettle which has been chipped so that the iron underneath is exposed.

Hard water containing considerable alkali may give potatoes a greenish tint, as it does rice. To avoid this greenish tint, Florence B. King, Bureau of Home Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, suggests cooking potatoes in soft water or in water containing a little acid.

Another color change that often occurs in potatoes after cooking is blackening or greying, due to substances in the potato which turn dark on contact with alkaline water and heat. This blackening usually appears as the potatoes stand in the air after cooking. Boiled or steamed potatoes show it much more than baked potatoes.

Milk added immediately as the potatoes come from the stove helps to prevent this unpleasant color change, especially in mashed potatoes. Various cookery studies have shown that potatoes mashed with milk as soon as they are cooked do not darken so fast or so much as those with no milk added. Acid, such as vinegar or cream of tartar, in the cooking water also helps to prevent this darkening but unfortunately interferes with the softening of the potato.

The darkening that occurs when a raw potato is cut and exposed to air is an oxidation process and can be prevented by keeping the pared or cut potato in water until it goes on the stove.

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